

News Release

Students from U of M Crookston will “Pay It Forward” on Spring Break Tour March 9-17, 2007

By Lisa Samuelson, Elizabeth Tollefson on Tuesday, February 27, 2007

CROOKSTON, Minn. (February 16, 2007) – For Rich Stangle, Hastings, Minn., student body president, and 25 other students at the University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC), spring break will be spent on the 2007 Pay It Forward Tour. Stangle will be on one of the 15 charter buses that will take 600 students rom 77 cities on an alternative spring break trip focused on service. This year's tour takes place from March 9-17, 2007.



Students will travel different routes to six different cities (Eau Claire, Wis.; Bloomington, Ill.; Louisville, Ky.; Charleston, W.Va.; Virginia Beach, Va.; Washington D.C.) to work on service projects. The trip is designed to build student leaders who will come back and serve in their own communities.

The tour is part of Students Today Leaders Forever (STLF), a student-led nonprofit organization focused on leadership development through promoting initiative and living with passion. STLF was founded by four college freshmen during the fall of 2003 at the University of Minnesota. The students established STLF with the idea of organizing a community service road trip over spring break, known today as the Pay It Forward Tour. In 2004, 43 students and adults traveled from Minneapolis to Washington, D.C., on the first-ever Pay It Forward Tour. Last year, 23 members of the Crookston campus and community participated in the tour.

Students volunteer and team up with organizations in several cities as they travel to their final destination, Washington, D.C. As they make their way across the country, each bus of students takes part in a variety of service opportunities including working with senior citizens, reading to and tutoring elementary students, sorting and boxing food at food banks, inner-city cleanup, serving in homeless shelters and much more. The purpose of the Pay It Forward Tour is to use community service to instill change in people and in communities. While the students know it isn't possible to solve a community's social issue in three hours of service, the goal is to leave an impact on the people they work with in the communities and promote awareness across the country regarding the importance of service.

"This trip is an amazing experience that no college student can afford to miss," Stangle says.

Collaborating, opening, re-inventing and empowering make up CORE, a small group of people who challenge the process and each other to become better leaders while working toward a common goal. Stangle is one of the CORE bus leaders for the 2007 tour.

To learn more about STLF and Pay It Forward Tour, contact Lisa Samuelson, director of student activities at UMC at 218-281-8507 (samue006@umn.edu).

The University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC) delivers more than 25 applied-science undergraduate degree programs and 50 concentrations, including online degrees, in agriculture; arts, humanities and social sciences; business; math, science and technology; and natural resources. UMC is dedicated to helping students and the region aim higher, reach further and dream bigger dreams. To learn more, visit www.UMCrookston.edu.

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